14:International Bank S-5 (1954) 1955 MD1 Syria MD1

Urban Social Welfare

368 It seems desirable in the near future to inaugurate some social welfare work in the urban areas as a counterpart of the proposed community work in the rural areas. Initially this will have to be on a modest and experimental scale. We suggest that over the next six years 8 to 10 centers be established to serve as focal points for voluntary community activities. About £S 350,000 might be allocated for investment in such centers, and £S 120,000 for operating expenditures. The centers would provide facilities for reading, radio listening, community meetings, adult education courses and eventually even for community baths. It would be advisable to combine the community hall as far as possible with the traditional school building; we therefore recommend that all new schools be constructed as all-purpose buildings which can serve children during the day and adults at night. The centers might well be put in the charge of selected teachers who would receive some special training in social work.

We would stress particularly that this modest program is experimental in character. Experience with the first centers will demonstrate how useful they can be, what needs they must serve and how they can best meet these needs.

Public Buildings[37]

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361 Public buildings are, of course, prominent features in most settlements of any size. They must be properly planned and fitted into town planning schemes so that they will be of maximum service to the government and the community. Elsewhere in this report we have discussed building requirements for agriculture, education, health and similiar special purposes. Any development program should also take into account the probable outlays on buildings of a general administrative character. The mission, however, had very little basis on which to project investment expenditures on government buildings of this kind. During the period 1949-53 the Ministry of Public Works spent on an average about £S 1 million on the construction of public buildings for purposes other than agriculture, education and health. The mission thought it advisable to assume that such expenditures would rise in the future and has accord-

[37] See Annex 1, p. 472.